

**Strategy Paper in Local
Governance**

for

CARE India

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Best Practices Foundation

1 Palmgrove Road, Victoria Layout,
Bangalore - 560 047,
Karnataka, India

Tel: +91-80-25301861

Email: bpfound@gmail.com

www.bestpracticesfoundation.com

**Strategy Paper in Local Governance
For CARE, New Delhi**

Submitted by
Dr Sangeetha Purushothaman, Director, Best Practices Foundation

Best Practices Foundation
1 Palmgrove Road,
Victoria Layout
Bangalore 560047
bpfound@vsnl.com

Contents of the Strategy Papers Package

Introduction
Framework
Concept Paper 1
Concept Paper 2
Review
Appendices to the Review

Introduction to Strategy Paper in Local Governance Designed for CARE **By Sangeetha Purushothaman, Best Practices Foundation**

To improve governance at both micro and macro levels must use a broad three-pronged strategy which combines research, action and advocacy. For any new entrant into the field of rural self governance there are several opportunities and challenges at hand. Thus *the primary goal* is to design an appropriate strategy that matches CARE's goals and objectives to the challenges and need of the day in the field of local self-governance.

Opportunities

- In the field of local governance, there are no pre existing commitments for CARE that tie it down to any particular strategy or level at which to intervene.
- There is a vast amount of expertise already developed and in the process of being developed, albeit in pockets by NGOs in this field. There are simultaneously many gaps that need to be addressed.
- Most actors in this field have in-depth knowledge mainly in their area of expertise but do not know the whole field with its range of capacity building needs nor the existing interventions designed to address them.
- In several states CARE already has good relations with government at state, district and block levels and has experience of undertaking capacity building activities with the government.

Thus some primary needs of the day in local self governance are as follows:

- To look for and fill gaps in existing capacity building measures especially in CARE areas of intervention namely health, food security and education.
- To design a comprehensive capacity building strategy for elected representatives that combines the best of what exists and addresses future unmet needs.
- To mainstream and upscale the highest quality capacity building package to equip ERs with the best possible tools to govern.
- To create entirely new mechanisms of interaction and support structures and thereby challenge old power structures and modes of interaction.
- To intervene structurally and improve the legislative and political climate for elected men and women to govern in each state and nationally.

To address these needs in a structured, systematic and phased manner a long term phased strategy has been drawn up (See framework) that CARE can consider as a basis for building its strategy to make a difference in the field of rural local self governance.

Based on these needs and opportunities, two concept papers are presented here that each outline the following: the background/ problem analysis statement, the primary goal, the key concepts, strategies and interventions based on the concepts, CARE's role and potential partners' roles and suggested geography/ scale. A third concept lies embedded in the Phase 3 of the Framework outlined and need only be developed at a future date based on the needs at that time, and the outcomes from the first two phases and CARE's priorities and resource base at the time.

**Phase 1: Collective Assessment and Building External and Internal Expertise in CARE:
The Next 2 Years Till the Next Election**

	Research	Intervention	Advocacy
<i>Step 1: Alliance building at the state and national levels and developing a broad forum for collection assessment and action.</i>	<p>1.1. Collect secondary data state wise on women's political participation, base line data, assessments on specific programmes and interventions</p> <p>1.2. Identify research partners in each state</p> <p>1.3. Assess the quality of existing data</p> <p>1.4. Assess capacity of potential state level research partners to lead a participatory research, alliance building and critical reflection process.</p> <p>1.5. Create literature (e.g. brochures) on intended initiatives for dissemination at state and national levels to invite broad participation.</p> <p>1.6. Create a web site to be used as a means to keep stakeholders informed with regular updates right through the years.</p>	<p>1.1. Workshop with all stakeholders to define the purpose, scope and methodology of research needed.</p> <p>1.2. Initial alliance building with government and NGOs to ensure their long-term participation.</p> <p>1.3. Building a state task force which serves as a forum for continuous feedback and reflection as research proceeds</p> <p>1.4. Build a national taskforce.</p>	<p>1.1. Ensure politicians and policy makers (MLAs, MPs Ministers) participate in workshops.</p> <p>1.2. Ensure politicians and policy makers are informed about the initiative</p> <p>1.3. Involving government and policy makers in the task force</p> <p>1.4. Disseminate literature through visits to relevant national government and policy makers to inform them about the initiative and towards building a taskforce</p>
<i>Step 2: In each state initiating a participatory research process with all stakeholders for conducting the state wise research</i>	<p>2.1. Conduct research to assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. State specific conditions like the Act, socio-economic conditions, and factors that favour or impede women's political participation. b. Base line study on elected women if secondary data does not have it c. Best practices in state and civil society d. Relationships across the three PRI tiers towards forging accountability between the tiers across party lines. e. Surface gaps and recommendations for research, intervention and advocacy. f. Work on the Gram Sabha g. Other state specific needs <p>1.1. Conduct a comparative analysis of different state acts to assess barriers and factors that facilitate the participation of women within the Acts themselves.</p>	<p>2.1. Exposure visits of government and NGOs to best practices/model panchayats as surfaced by the research in each state</p> <p>2.2. Exposure visits of national task force, NGOs and government to best practices across states</p> <p>2.3. Disseminate findings on baseline study through regular reports or newsletters to all stakeholders and invite their input towards the upcoming workshop.</p> <p>2.4. Raise awareness among NGOs on the state wise Acts and policies in each state.</p> <p>2.5. Raise awareness among NGOs on the differences among the states act and their implications for women's participation</p> <p>2.6. Raise awareness on the functioning of the three tiers and problems faced by GPs members while trying to pass decisions and access resources.</p>	<p>2.1. Informing government and policy makers on potential best practices towards mainstreaming these practices and towards legal or policy changes needed to improve the political climate.</p> <p>2.2. Inform government and policy makers on findings of baseline study</p> <p>2.3. Update website with the research findings and advertise the workshops.</p> <p>2.4. Raise awareness among government and policy makers on the differences among the states act and their implications for women's participation</p>

	Research	Intervention	Advocacy
<i>Step 3: Determine the Agenda for intervention and advocacy based on research</i>	<p>3.1. State workshop to report out research findings and plan strategies for intervention in each state.</p> <p>3.2. National workshop where each state research partner reports out research findings, NGO partners report on the state plan of action for intervention and government reports on the agenda for policy and advocacy issues.</p>	<p>3.1. Civil society actors lead a dialogue to set the agenda for intervention</p> <p>3.2. Creation of a comprehensive intervention and capacity building package at every stage within each state</p>	<p>3.1. Government leads a discussion on advocacy based on exposure visits within and outside each state and the research findings</p> <p>3.2. Government and policy makers set the agenda for policy change and brainstorms strategies for the same.</p> <p>3.3. PRI representatives from the three tiers should be invited to state workshops for discussions on accountability across party lines.</p> <p>3.4. Press coverage for state and national workshops</p>
<i>Step 4: Dissemination of research findings and agenda for action</i>	<p>4.1. Publication of newsletters and book on research findings.</p> <p>4.2. Produce photos or films which NGOs can use to disseminate findings with the community</p>	<p>4.1. Newsletters and literature on strategy for capacity building and advocacy to build broad based consensus</p> <p>4.2. Outreach to all NGOs working on governance to spread the strategy and invite feedback and participation</p> <p>4.3. Disseminate research findings through NGOs in the GP and GS and obtain feedback on interventions necessary from both perspectives.</p>	<p>4.1 Press release of findings and of the book released</p> <p>4.2 Media coverage on gaps to set the stage for interventions needed</p> <p>4.3 Media coverage to agenda for action of the state task forces</p>

Phase 2: Innovation, Testing and Refining the Interventions in CARE's Priority Areas Using the Rights Approach

	Research	Intervention	Advocacy
<i>Step 1: Analysis and reflection process to promote CARE's Priority Areas in local governance</i>	1.1 Analyse the existing capacity building measures to see which stakeholders are working in CARE's priority areas health, education and food security through local government. 1.2 Assess gaps and recommendations for intervention	1.1 Analyse collectively with NGOs and government the priority areas to determine the intervention and advocacy needed 1.2 Determine areas for new innovations in these areas to better develop them if needed 1.3 Determine what are the essential complements in capacity building to those to needed in the priority areas	1.1. Government assesses policy measures needed to facilitate the effectiveness of all tiers of the PRIs to deliver goods and services in the priority areas 1.2. Representatives of all PRI tiers give input on how to improve their effectiveness in the priority areas 1.3. Sangha and NGO representatives provide input on community needs in these areas.
<i>Step 2: Collectively set the agenda and framework for innovation in CARE's priority areas and the rights approach</i>	2.1 Document the workshop to design the conceptual framework 2.2 Identify gaps and recommendations for research, advocacy and action 2.3 Present the agenda for action based on the workshop in the form of reports, literature, brochures and media releases	2.1. Identify those NGOs (like trainers collectives) with the capacity for innovation in each state 2.2. State workshops with trainers, human rights groups, CARE partners in health, education, food security and stakeholders in local governance to reflect on integration 2.3. Determine conceptual framework for individual training and three way integration with human rights, CARE's priority areas and local governance with the Gram Sabha and Gram panchayat especially with the rights approach	2.1. Orient and get the government and PRI representatives to commit to working with the NGOs on the priority areas and on the rights approach
<i>Step 3: Create new modules in CARE's priority areas, the Gram Sabha and in the use of the rights approach</i>	3.1. Document and disseminate these new modules on the rights approach and the priority areas 3.2. Through interviews with all stakeholders and process documentation surface areas for improvement for future replication and policy changes required on a larger scale. 3.3. Conduct a comparative analysis on the impact of the interventions in the three sets of pilots 3.4. Surface gaps and recommendations for refinement of a new package based on analysis	3.1. NGOs pilot a second package with the new modules in CARE's priority areas 3.2. NGOs create and pilot new modules with the rights approach. 3.3. NGOs pilot a third package with all the new modules along with a comprehensive capacity building package from previous phase (budgets, programmes and so on) 3.4. Innovate on integrating the rights approach towards the goal of building the Gram Sabha.	3.1. Hold a collective reflection forum at the end of the process with all stakeholders to determine policy and advocacy changes needed in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1.1. The priority areas 3.1.2. The Rights Approach 3.1.3. The Gram sabha 3.2. Work with government to develop a new package integrating these areas into government training curricula for PRIs

	Research	Intervention	Advocacy
<i>Step 4: Use documentation to redesign the package for wider dissemination and for policy intervention</i>	<p>4.1. Use the documentation to redesign the interventions</p> <p>4.1.1. For CARE</p> <p>4.1.2. For a larger audience</p> <p>4.2. Conduct an impact assessment after some time has passed with interviews with elected representatives, sangha members, government and NGOs.</p>	<p>4.2. Based on feedback refine and design the most effective capacity building package based on CARE's priorities and resources</p> <p>4.3. Redesign an alternative package for intervention which is more comprehensive inclusive of CARE's priority areas for broader dissemination</p>	<p>4.1. Use advocacy tools and the newly developed expertise to advocate for the use and dissemination of the broader package and the modules for CARE's priority areas with larger players in governance and with policy makers</p>
<i>Step 5: State workshop to share experiences</i>	<p>5.1. Documentation findings shared at state workshops</p>	<p>5.1. State Workshops to share experiences with all stake holders on new modules</p>	<p>5.1. Get state policy makers and government to discuss upscaling and incorporation of the new modules into their curriculum</p>
<i>Step 6: National meet for states to share their experiences</i>	<p>6.1. Document the national workshop and reports of each state</p> <p>6.2. Disseminate the findings of impact assessment and state workshops</p>	<p>6.1. National workshop with all stake holders for different states to share their experiences</p>	<p>6.1. Invite government from the four selected states as well as government and NGOs from other states where CARE would like this work to be replicated</p>
<i>Step 7: Pilot on larger scale and with government involvement</i>	<p>7.1. Document the pilot to further upscale</p> <p>7.2. Develop CARE's internal expertise and practical experience in the area of governance and establish it as a key player through these innovations</p>	<p>7.1. Pilot new modules with government to upscale the intervention</p> <p>7.2. Create communications mechanisms to disseminate the module among other players and with policy makers</p>	<p>7.1. Work with government and policy makers to integrate these new areas into their work</p> <p>7.2. Identify with government and civil society collectively the policy changes needed to facilitate the pilot and to spread it into other areas</p>
<i>Step 8: Dissemination and advocacy on the new modules</i>	<p>8.1. Write up literature to disseminate the findings on strategy for other states</p> <p>8.2. Publish book for wide outreach and dissemination to establish CARE as a player with special expertise</p>	<p>8.1. Establish legitimacy of the need for capacity building in CARE areas</p> <p>8.2. Negotiate with other organizations to conduct a training of trainers to spread this knowledge</p>	<p>8.1. Mainstream within government curriculum the new modules evolved to ensure that this intervention is state wide</p> <p>8.2. Send out report/book/publication to policy makers in all states</p>

**Phase 3: Long Term Upscaling, Mainstreaming and Evaluation:
CARE's Specific Areas and the Comprehensive Capacity Building Package Needed**

	Research	Intervention	Advocacy
<i>Step 1: Design the pilots in different states to upscale the different packages for capacity Building</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Workshop with all state partners to design the pilot for capacity building and the participatory monitoring and evaluation indicators 1.2. Creation of a state pilot design to be tested with a small sample for results based on outcomes and findings from phase 2 1.3. Design literature for dissemination 1.4. Workshop to design the assessment of the pilot state initiative with all stake holders, especially government and decision makers for a minimum of 2 districts in every state. 1.5. Design the monitoring and assessment component 1.6. Obtain agreements from government and NGOs on regular reporting and documentation 1.7. Process documentation of the interventions 1.8. Monitoring and evaluation systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Build a core set of partners working on CARE's priority areas for intervention with local government 1.2. Build a core set of partners interesting in implementing the overall strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Exposure visits of government to training sessions 1.2. Training government as part of the training resource group to set the stage for upscaling 1.3. Government functionaries and GP secretaries undergo gender sensitization towards the goal of increasing the space for women's political participation.
<i>Step 2: Conduct the pilot to Upscale and Mainstream the comprehensive capacity Building Strategy through Government and all NGOs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Collect baseline data in a sample basis and keep one control group of elected representatives who do not receive this package to assess impact. 2.2. Conduct the evaluation and impact assessment 2.3. Documentation, monitoring and impact assessment of government officials training 2.4. Documentation, monitoring and evaluation of the GP members training in pilot districts 2.5. Surface gaps and problems to provide feedback at all levels 2.6. Fine tune interventions after getting feedback 2.7. Write up the key lessons from upscaling the initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Build a training resource group of NGO and government for intervention on the comprehensive package 2.2. Intensive training of master trainers from government to upscale strategy 2.3. Orient and sensitize government officials on gender, the 73rd amendment and purpose of the initiative 2.4. Government in turn trains GP members on scale on a pilot basis (1-2 districts) 2.5. Testing the comprehensive capacity building package in a phased manner 2.6. Involve senior government to observe and junior officials to administer the training strategy as part of the pilot 2.7. Dialogue with government and other NGOs to assess and disseminate training outcomes of each component. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Report to top officials on the outcomes of the training in pilot districts 2.2. Begin dialogue on alliance building towards a phased expansion to more districts and the entire state 2.3. Begin dialogue on intervention outside capacity building

	Research	Intervention	Advocacy
<i>Step 3: Create dialogue forums at all levels, cluster, block and district levels</i>	3.1. Conduct cluster level forums for awareness raising and sharing of experiences across clusters of 10 neighboring villages to assess problems on the ground 3.2 Share research findings at these levels 3.3 Document block level melas 3.4 Document inter-block sharing 3.5 Document district melas 3.6 Surface problems experienced by PRI members at all levels through documentation of events and separate interviews with all actors	3.1. Build the stage for informal sharing across clusters of 10 villages with GP and sanghas 3.2. Build the base for cluster level federations and networking 3.3. Conduct block level melas for the same with block level officials and Taluk panchayat officials 3.4. Conduct inter block melas (2-4 blocks) for sharing across blocks to position model blocks and reward officials, GP and TP members who are doing good work and build peer pressure 3.5. Conduct a district mela and inter-district melas for experience sharing and official participation to build relationships between different PRI tiers and the bureaucracy	3.1 Involve all tiers of the PRI officials in policy dialogue of delivery of public goods and services across the tiers and across party lines 3.2 Involve government officials at the workshops at cluster, block, inter-block, district and inter-district levels to share information on government programmes, application procedures and to build linkages and relationships. 3.3 Raise concerns with policy makers, PRI and government officials on gaps and barriers experienced by PRI members at all levels towards advocacy change.
<i>Step 4: Feedback and redesign at district level</i>	4.1. District level sharing of research findings, best practices and gaps with district heads and representatives from all PRI tiers. 4.2. Identification of those problems that can be resolved at district and state levels	4.1. NGOs and sanghas provide input towards redesign of training strategy	4.2. PRI officials, government and policy makers provide input in redesign of training strategy 4.3. Government and policy makers modify district level policy to address gaps and barriers
<i>Step 5: Assessment at the State Levels</i>	5.1. Document and assess the strategy in each state 5.2. Surface further gaps in capacity building measures at state level 5.3. Surface other barriers faced by women elected representatives	5.1. Sensitize government on issues that need to be addressed at the policy, structural and legislative levels 5.2. NGOs monitor and administer the pilot 5.3. NGOs provide critical feedback towards fine tuning the process	5.1. Government leads the discussion towards scaling up the strategy and discusses possible future partnerships 5.2. Government leads the discussion on policy and legislation changes needed.
<i>Step 6: State level Reflection and Redesign</i>	6.1. State Workshop to share findings and experiences, best practices and problems at the state level, with state level officials and all stakeholders towards the goal of redesigning the existing strategy	6.2. Redesign overall strategy for upscaling	6.1. Redesign of strategy in current districts and for future expansion with government and policy makers 6.2. Dialogue on policy and legislative changes needed to address macro level barriers.

	Research	Intervention	Advocacy
<i>Step 7: National workshop</i>	7.1. National level workshop to share findings across states	7.1. Redesign the strategy nationally.	7.1. Look at legislative and policy gaps that need to be addressed
<i>Step 8: Expansion within states to other districts</i>	Steps 2, 3 and 4 repeat in the new districts 8.1. Evaluation at the state level of all districts (new and old)	Steps 2, 3 and 4 repeat in the new districts 8.1. Exposure visits across new and old districts for officials, NGOs and GP members 8.2. District and block workshops to share experiences with all stake holders	Steps 2, 3 and 4 repeat in the new districts
<i>Step 9: Sharing across States</i>	9.1. National workshop where each state government and civil society partners report out and share experiences 9.2. Surfacing and dissemination of best practices in government in each state	9.1. Exposure visits of NGOs, government and policy makers across states to best practices	
<i>Step 10: Cross Fertilization</i>	10.1. Translation of select materials into the local language 10.2. Documentation of pilot initiatives in new states 10.3. Feedback on the type of adaptation needed 10.4. Dissemination across states about the cross fertilization initiatives	10.1. Meetings at the state level to decide on the best practices to be replicated. 10.2. NGOs and concerned personnel of best practices invited for initial consultations and to discuss replication and whether state conditions lend to replication 10.3. Training of trainers across states 10.4. Piloting and adaptation of the new initiative in another state 10.5. Mainstreaming and up-scaling the initiative.	10.1. Invite policy makers and government of several states to newly replicated models in the pilot sites. 10.2. Policy makers across states dialogue on upscaling the initiatives.
<i>Step 11: Assessment of political climate</i>	11.1. Final assessment in each state of the political climate and problems within each state at the structural, legislative and policy level	11.2. Education and awareness raising through media and workshops of state and national government policy makers	11.3. Design an agenda for policy intervention
<i>Step 12: Dissemination and advocacy</i>	12.1. Write up literature to disseminate the findings on the strategy for other states	12.1. Establish legitimacy of the need for systematic and proper capacity building in terms of content, phasing and quality for elected representatives for all stake holder 12.2. Educate the general public	12.1. Mainstream within government curriculum the final strategy evolved through this process to ensure that this intervention is now state wide 12.2. Send out report/book/publication to policy makers in all states

**Building Partnerships and a Collective Assessment on
Capacity Building for Elected Representatives: Past, Present and Future Initiatives
By Dr. Sangeetha Purushothaman, Best Practices Foundation**

I. Background

The passage of the 73rd amendment to the constitution and the rejuvenation of the Panchayati Raj institutions, has revolutionized local self governance in rural India. The first term witnessed confusion among NGOs and government alike as to how to deal with this sweeping change in the form of devolution of resources and power to the villages and gram panchayats and especially to women in what can be termed the largest global experiment in electoral quotas. By the second term several NGOs had begun to engage with these newly rejuvenated institutions and a vast amount of expertise developed, some of which is state specific while some of it is not. Both government and NGOs have developed expertise in training elected representatives in the areas of gender, roles, responsibilities and functions of Panchayati Raj institutions, budgets and government programmes. Other new areas where some NGOs have begun capacity building for elected representatives include vision based exercises, leadership, micro-planning, and Gram Sabha among others. However despite a vast amount of progress on addressing the capacity building needs in various states, the reality on the ground is that these capacity building initiatives reach very few elected representatives. Thus the reach of NGOs who have developed quality interventions remains in pockets, fragmented and not comprehensive in coverage. The government with its capacity and resources to work on scale does not provide true capacity building in terms of quality compared to NGOs. Thus the goals of this concept note are designed to bridge this gap.

II. Primary Goals

Thus to address the primary need of the day the goals here would be:

- To design a comprehensive capacity building strategy for elected representatives (ERs) that combines the best of what exists and creates strategies for unaddressed needs raised by elected women representatives (EWRs) themselves (including a communications module to teach EWRs public speaking, micro planning, a sensitization strategy for GP secretaries and GP male members).
- To mainstream and upscale the highest quality capacity building package to equip ERs with the best possible tools to govern effectively.
- To assess what capacity building measures exist through local government in the areas of health, education and food security.

Strategies designed towards these goals should span the two years prior to the next election to build expertise in advance. Concepts and strategies outlined address these goals, the need to build CARE's internal knowledge and expertise in the area and simultaneously build partnerships in the field. For the assessment phase (1) four states should be selected based on geographical representation, good work and strong innovation in governance and CARE presence. The intervention phase (2 and 3) needs to be in areas based on need, CARE presence and where intervention in governance is inadequate.

III. The Key Concepts

The following concepts for the basis of the conceptual design:

3.1. *Involvement of all stakeholders from the very beginning* in order to:

- Build in ownership over the process
- Build partnerships between the different actors such that when research, advocacy or interventions are required these actors are already well informed and prepared to undertake the types of initiatives needed.

This is also based on the understanding that no one actor can do everything. The government has reach and capacity to go on scale while NGOs have the expertise, the ground relationships with the community, the knowledge of how to build the Gram Sabha and how to enhance community participation in governance.

3.2. *Information dissemination*

- Basic information on the Panchayati Raj Act, roles and responsibilities of members, budgets of the panchayats, government programmes and the gender aspects of local self governance are considered the minimum inputs that every elected representative should have access to. This information should also be further made available to the community if the Gram Sabha is to be eventually made the decision making body in local self governance.
- Elected representatives should be made aware of where to locate resources, government agencies and programmes, banks and financial institutions.

Besides this type of information which can be imparted through training elected representatives learn best by sharing with each other. Often women elected officials find themselves completely isolated and this isolation can end by ensuring they have the forums for interaction and exchange where on the ground knowledge can be obtained through informal channels of communications. The tools to allow this is to build in peer exchanges and allow for federations to be built.

3.3. *Building social capital* among:

- Elected representatives and the bureaucracy
- Elected representatives
- Elected representatives across the tiers
- Elected representatives and CBOs

Information dissemination is a necessary but not sufficient condition for effective governance. Elected representatives may have the knowledge on where to access resources and where to get programmes and services for village development but if they do not have relationships or the social capital with the bureaucracy and across the three tiers of panchayati raj institutions, just plain knowledge will not help. Elected women representatives in particular with their relative lack of mobility do not have the advantages of their male counterparts in the form of on-going interaction and established relationships with other men in the PRI institutions and the bureaucracy. Thus building these relationships by allowing face to face contact by creating new forums of interaction such as block and district melas and through cluster level meetings and finally to attempt to build federations across cluster block and district become the essential tools towards ending isolation and creating new types of relationships. One major gap identified is the

fact that the last tier the Gram Panchayat while supposedly non-party and other two tiers are partisan based and party relations prevents the three tiers from functioning smoothly. The challenge is how to get ERs to be accountable across party lines.

3.4. *Convergence of interventions* (existing and new) to address all the needs

- To end isolation among institutions working on local self governance
- To change the climate from competitive to a space for learning and reflection
- To equip elected representatives in the most comprehensive possible manner

Only by designing the highest quality intervention, will government be willing to partner and only with that quality can the best intervention be provided to people. Also mainstreaming an initiative and taking it on scale only makes sense if all needs are addressed and all tools possible given to people to effectively govern. Otherwise taking one intervention alone on scale leaves many other gaps unaddressed.

IV. Key Strategies and Interventions

The overall strategy would entail utilizing research that assesses the state of the art to lead the interventions in terms of capacity building and advocacy targeted at the macro level. For an overview of the strategy and for the detailed interventions see Table 1 (Phase 1: Collective Assessment). It involves the following

- *Alliance building* from the beginning of all stake holders especially select/key NGOs working in the area and policy makers and government at state and national levels to develop a broad forum for collection assessment and action.
- Let this alliance (what could take the form of national and state task forces) determine the *research agenda* nationally and in each state where a participatory inclusive research process that entails learning for all not just the researchers should help set the stage for intervention.
- Covering the work of key institutions in every state through research create a *comprehensive package for capacity building* in each state.
- Based on the work done and the package evolved the task forces can set the *agenda for intervention and advocacy*
- *Widespread dissemination* of the strategy and the package through media and mailings to build up a consensus and get more NGOs involved and to inform government and policy makers
- *Testing the Entire Package* which first entails training of trainers by NGOs involved in building specific components of the capacity building of each other and then testing this entire package on the ground with select groups of ERs.
- *Assessment at the State Levels:* In each state this pilot test should be monitored and an assessment of impact done comparatively with those who received the training and those (a control group) who did not. The packages should then be refined in time to administer for the new term.

V. Outputs, Roles and Partners

Outputs

By the end of the two years needed CARE should have developed the following:

- A comprehensive package on training and capacity building that is state specific.
- A set of partnerships with the key NGOs doing work in the field of governance state wise and nationally with an understanding of the expertise of each.
- State and national partnerships with government and policy makers for future involvement in the coming phases of upscaling the package, for policy and advocacy change and an understanding of the strength of each partner in the field.
- Internal expertise on state specific acts and the provisions therein, the needs of elected representatives, capacity building initiatives to address those needs, what works and what does not work among various initiatives and the impact of this capacity building initiatives.
- A clear overview of which capacity building interventions already exist through local government in CARE's priority areas of health, education and food security.
- State task forces would be in place in select states with a potential set of resource personnel who could serve in phase 2 for building state training resource groups.
- CARE should have established a national presence through hosting two national workshops and building a national task force.

Towards these outputs a total outlay of about 15 lakhs would be required for CARE to establish itself and to obtain the expertise and partnerships required to make a meaningful contribution in terms of actual intervention and advocacy.

Roles

The roles of other partners would be essentially the following:

For NGOs working in the field it would involve

- To help develop a comprehensive capacity building package towards the goal of the larger good of the electorate and elected representatives both.
- To contribute their expertise towards a larger forum for upscaling at the state level through government
- To contribute their expertise in the fields of health, education and food security administered through local self governance
- To work together and train each other in their respective areas

For government and policy makers it would involve

- Being part of this phase of collective assessment, learning and reflection primarily to learn the state of the art in initiatives being developed on the ground
- A willingness to work with NGOs at a later stage towards upscaling these initiatives
- Officials should participate in training of these capacity building initiatives alongside NGOs to fully understand the package and then further be part of the pilot to train elected representatives and provide their input on this experience on a small scale.

For large partners already involved on governance such as the Hunger Project

- CARE would have to negotiate with the Hunger project which is funding organizations at the field level to administer training and capacity building at the state level towards this larger goal of consolidation of lessons, upscaling, mainstreaming and policy change.

VI. Potential Partners

Global

- The Huairou Commission
- UNDP governance division
- UNCHS
- Best Practices Foundation, in Bangalore as a link to the Hunger Project and as a global link as secretariat to the Huairou Commission a coalition of six global networks working in the area of gender, development and governance.

National

- The Hunger Project
- Ford Foundation
- Rajiv Gandhi Foundation
- PRIA
- Institute Social Sciences
- Mahila Samakhya (for a gender perspective)

State

- The Hunger Project State Councils on Panchayati Raj (which have some of the main players in governance in each state council and are in the process of being revamped to include more institutions involved in local self governance)

Budget Phase 1: Collective Assessment and Building External/Internal Partnerships and Expertise in CARE

National Workshop (initial)	200000
Secondary research and state workshops in select states (6 months)	400000
National Workshop (final)	300000
Lead Organization (12 months)	
Salaries	357000
Identify stakeholders in select state for the national workshop	
National report and national strategy	
Coordination across states and nationally	
Collect national data (local travel and xerox)	10000
Collect state data (xerox)	10000
Produce literature on the initiative	10000
Design and maintain a website	20000
Analysis (comparative across states and national)	
Travel to four states to provide intensive support and collective reflection	100000
Communications nationally and with four states (phone/courier)	36000
Travel to Delhi (2 visits)	50000
Publication of newsletters	20000
Publication of book	75000
Stationary and photos	36000
Overhead	53550
Total	1677550

**Innovation, Testing and Refining the Interventions in CARE's Priority Areas
Using the Rights Approach
By Dr. Sangeetha Purushothaman, Best Practices Foundation**

I. Introduction

In most fields and particularly in the field of local self-governance where intervention is relatively recent, no one actor has all the solutions. However, each actor has its own distinct expertise. Between government and NGOs, the strength varies widely in terms of scale and quality of intervention with government on one side of the spectrum having the resources and the reach but rates as low in quality of delivery of capacity building measures. NGOs on the other side of the spectrum, have achieved a high quality of innovation due to their relationships with the community but given the resource being few, their reach is also very small. Among NGOs, each develop their own area of expertise or bring their diverse experiences into the field of governance including gender, health, reproductive health, income generation, linkages with government or financial institutions among other broad areas. Thus CARE needs to define what would be its best course for intervention, given the state of the art in capacity building measures, given the types of policy and advocacy measures needed and the current scenario as experienced by elected representatives in the field of local self governance.

In this, consideration for choice of geographic area of intervention depends on the following

- States which CARE is already operating
- States where there is strong need in the CARE's priority areas
- States where local governance needs to be improved
- States where institutions working in CARE's areas and local governance both exist

II. Primary Goals

Overall phase 1 a collective assessment was made of select states and nationally, which provided a context, partnerships and background information required before any type of intervention is decided upon and designed. The goals of this second phase are:

- For CARE to decide on the type of intervention which would make a mark and a serious contribution in the field of local governance
- Based on the gaps in CARE's past areas of expertise (health, education and food security) pioneer new innovations and design new interventions thus creating a special niche of knowledge and expertise for CARE through local government
- To pioneer new innovations using the rights based approach to open up a space within local self governance that makes it more transparent and accountable to people by which basic human rights are guaranteed.

III. Key Concepts

- *Build on Existing Knowledge:* CARE builds on existing expertise in its own areas to establish itself as a player in local governance with a specific agenda. It also builds on existing expertise through taking the best of capacity building measure in local

governance and incorporating it in its own work. This constitutes a safe entry into the field of governance. Most new entrants however run the risk of being seen as issue based and consequently not being able to address the most basic and fundamental concerns of elected representatives. To safeguard the organization on this issue, given that the expertise would already exist with CARE from phase 1, it is advisable to have a multi pronged experimental approach in this phase.

- *Responding to Need:* In prior work with elected representatives, NGOs have found there to be a demand on issues relating to funds and resources and thus having a module that responds to those needs if and when they arise is important.
- *Building model panchayats:* Experimenting on a small scale to build model panchayats on CARE's priority areas, on the rights approach and using a comprehensive approach integrating all of this and more.
- *Understanding what works and what is needed:* Before going on scale and spending resources this approach helps one understand what works in theory first and then in practice on a smaller scale.

IV. Strategies and Interventions

Strategies designed towards these goals should be aimed at the period during and after the next election to administer the capacity building measures needed by elected representatives. Concepts and strategies outlined address these goals, the need for CARE to build specialized expertise in its priority areas and simultaneously build partnerships towards upscaling and mainstreaming the initiative. The phase for innovation needs to be in states chosen based on CARE presence, need and where there is the highest potential for innovation.

The choices in terms of strategy are as follows:

1. *Work in CARE's priority areas through involving local governance:* With emphasis on CARE's existing areas (health, education and food security), choose those capacity building initiatives in these areas only to work on through the panchayats. Here the emphasis will be to build expertise and support new innovations in these areas only and develop a niche for CARE in intervention in the priority areas through the PRIs.
2. *Emphasize CARE's priority areas but provide other forms of capacity building* to elected representatives to facilitate their effectiveness in delivery of public goods and services in health, education and so on. One type of intervention in these priority areas would be strengthen the capacity of elected representatives and communities both to access goods and services in these areas which would require that the elected representatives understand budgets, schemes and functions of the panchayat and that the community too understand these in the context of their participation and decision making roles in the Gram Sabha. At the end of the day the various capacities required are interrelated for elected representatives to deliver any public goods and services in any area. Perhaps capacity building in these other aspects are not avoidable and thus the package be administered with special emphasis on CARE priority areas with training on functions of local government, gender, budgets and schemes brought in only to facilitate the effectiveness of the elected representatives.
3. *Do both in different sets of villages to demonstrate what is needed in the long run:* Mainstream CARE's priority areas but in 3-4 model panchayats administer the full

package. This will not be too expensive and will simultaneously help demonstrate the differential impact of a comprehensive package of intervention vs a few areas and build in exposure visits for CARE to those model panchayats in each state. At the end you can also understand the differences across states in terms of new measures needed on the ground and in terms of macro policy needed. Thus you can have a pilot in each state even before you go on scale in the form of model panchayats which is very small.

4. *Support innovation in the rights approach* in the field of governance and thus develop a stronghold and special niche in this area. Currently two types of rights approaches are being developed in governance, the right to information approach and training in legal literacy for women. The former is specific to governance namely people's right to know more about their candidate, about public expenditure and decisions and so on and relates more to the Gram Sabha than the Gram Panchayat forcing only accountability on the GP. The legal literacy training given to elected representatives is one way to disseminate the rights of women and goes beyond the GP alone. Similarly new innovative work can be done on other area of the "rights approach" namely the right to adequate shelter, to education for all, equal opportunity for all. Thus since CARE is now emphasizing the rights approach for people to know, demand and realize their basic human rights through the panchayat, an entirely new area for innovation can open up in this context.

Interventions

- *Promotion of CARE's Priority Areas in local government:* Based on the research analyse the work already done in the priority areas and assess the current gaps. Collectively with all stakeholders set the agenda and framework for innovation in CARE's priority areas
- *Innovation in CARE's Priority Areas via local government:* In select states bring together trainers or organizations reputed for innovation towards building new modules to be administered via local self government, CARE's partners in these areas at the state level, and set the framework for the new innovation. Design the methodology and put in place the partnerships and agreements towards initiating the innovations in these areas.
- *Innovation in the use of the rights approach and activation of the Gram Sabha:* Bring together human rights groups, organizations working on the right to information and the Gram Sabha to set the framework for the new innovation in this area. Put in place the partnerships and agreements towards initiating the innovations in these areas.
- *Process documentation and feedback towards Refining the Package:* Pilot the modules and document the training. Assess impact after some time for three different groups of elected representatives whose capacities are build on:
 - Health, education and food security
 - Human rights
 - Health, education and food security, human rights, and established areas of intervention namely functions of the PRIs, roles and responsibilities, gender, budgets and government schemes.

Based on the impact assessment from several states collectively decide on how to redesign the package for wider dissemination and for policy intervention

- *Sharing at state and national levels:* Here have different state partners report on the new modules and the findings in each state of the impact assessment in front of government

officials and policy makers from each state. Decisions can be made nationally on which and how many modules CARE will promote and with which partners in each state.

- *Upscaling*: Pilot the innovations on larger scale with government involvement and NGO training and expertise.
- *Dissemination and advocacy on the new modules*: Use the impact assessment and pilot experiments to create literature to disseminate widely the new modules supported and developed through CARE at the national level and in all states to build up the demand for this type of intervention.

V. Outputs, Roles and Partners

Outputs

By the end of the two years needed CARE should have developed the following:

- State specific and national packages on training and capacity building in its priority areas
- State specific and national packages on training and capacity building using the human rights approach and working through the gram sabha
- A set of partnerships with the key NGOs doing work in the field of governance in select states and nationally with new expertise for the NGOs and for CARE both.
- State and national partnerships with government and policy makers for future upscaling of the new package, for policy and advocacy change.
- Internal expertise on a three way integrated approach of CARE's priority areas of health, education and food security, the human rights approach and local governance
- State task forces and training resource groups in select states with resource personnel who could serve to upscale the initiative.
- CARE should have established a national presence through hosting one national workshop, building a national task force and conducting media advocacy on its own areas of expertise.

Towards these outputs a total outlay of about 25 lakhs would be required for CARE to establish itself as a player in its own right and to obtain the expertise and partnerships needed to make a meaningful contribution both on the ground and in terms of policy.

Roles

The roles of other partners would be essentially the following:

For NGOs working in the field it would involve

- To innovate in areas of health, education and food security in local governance
- To innovate using the human rights approach in local governance
- To develop a comprehensive capacity building package integrating old expertise, human rights and CARE's areas of health, education and food security for elected representatives.
- To contribute expertise towards upscaling at the state level through government
- To contribute expertise in the fields of health, education and food security administered through local self governance
- To contribute expertise in the area of human rights and right to information

- To work together and train each other in their respective areas of expertise

For government and policy makers it would involve

- Being part of this phase of innovation in new areas, learning and reflection primarily to fill the gaps in capacity building initiatives
- A willingness to work with NGOs towards upscaling and mainstreaming these new innovations
- Officials should participate alongside NGOs in training of these new capacity building initiatives to fully understand the package and then further be part of the pilot to train elected representatives and provide their input on this experience.

For large partners already involved in governance such as the Hunger Project

- CARE would have to negotiate with the Hunger project which is funding organizations at the field level to administer training and capacity building at the state level towards this larger goal of consolidation of lessons, upscaling, mainstreaming and policy change.

VI. Potential Partners (same as in concept paper 1)

Global

- The Huairou Commission
- UNDP governance division
- UNCHS
- Best Practices Foundation, in Bangalore as a link to the Hunger Project and as a global link as secretariat to the Huairou Commission a coalition of six global networks working in the area of gender, development and governance.

National

- The Hunger Project
- Ford Foundation
- Rajiv Gandhi Foundation
- PRIA (research)
- Institute Social Sciences (research)
- Mahila Samakhya (for a gender perspective in local governance)

State

- The Hunger Project State Councils on Panchayati Raj (which have some of the main players in governance in each state council and are in the process of being revamped to include more institutions involved in local self governance)

**Phase 2: Budget for Innovation, Testing and Refining the Interventions:
CARE's Priority Areas, the Rights Approach and the Gram Sabha**

National Work

Lead Organization (12-18 months)	12 months
Coordination and communications across states consultancy**	360000
Design a monitoring and assessment process for states	
Communications	24000
Comparative analysis across states	
Travel to states	100000
Facilitate national workshop and sharing	
National reports on three pilots	
Publication of book and other literature	80000
Newsletters to share across states	20000
National dissemination and media advocacy	
Overhead	54000
National Workshop by CARE	300000
National and International data collection and dissemination by CARE	50000
Total National work	

State Work

	One state
State workshops for Three Way Integration	100000 400000
<i>Building new modules</i>	
Lead NGOs working on governance (4)	100000 400000
Other NGOs (human rights, priority areas)	50000 200000
Elected women training on CARE areas	15000 60000
Elected women training on human rights	15000 60000
Elected women and sangha training on gram sabha	15000 60000
Documentation of workshops and redesign of modules	40000 160000
Exposure visits of government and elected reps	10000 40000
Upscaling through government*	
Overhead	50000 200000
	395000
Total state work for four states	

Total national and state budgets 2568000

**Review of Creating New Spaces for Women:
Enhancing their Leadership Roles in Panchayati Raj Institutions
By Dr. Sangeetha Purushothaman**

The paper is an excellent review of the status of women in Panchayati Raj. This paper examines the different sections and adds new areas or the next steps required towards completing the analysis. These include understanding the need to create new definitions, appropriate analytic frameworks, indicators and measures of indicators for good governance.

I. The Need for New and Appropriate Definitions

The study should begin with a definition of governance and discuss indicators of good governance. Governance could be improved but not necessarily engendered by a simple devolution of funds or by mandating that Gram Sabhas be held among other such interventions. It is both improved and engendered when funds are devolved to women, when women attend and actively participate in Gram Sabhas and make their issues known and where the Gram Panchayat (GP) responds to their issues. The 73rd amendment by mandating reservations for women demands new definitions for improved governance that includes a gender dimension.

Thus the following two definitions of improved governance can be examined to create distinct indicators of improved governance and improved, engendered governance:

Perceived Improved Governance: Governance is perceived to be improved if it is more transparent, accountable, equitable, sustainable and participatory for the community at large.

Improved Engendered Governance: Governance is in fact improved if it is engendered meaning that if it is more transparent for women, accountable to women, equitable for women, has lasting sustainable changes for women and invites not just community participation but women's participation in particular.

Indicators that distinguish perceived improved governance from engendered and therefore improved governance are presented below (Table 1). The reason a conceptual framework is needed which has an engendered dimension is because governance could be transparent, accountable, equitable, sustainable and participatory entirely without the inclusion of women. This goes against the very spirit and grain of the 73rd amendment.

Thus any research, monitoring or assessment framework for interventions that seek to ensure women's political participation would require:

- Clarity of the distinction between perceived improved governance and improved, engendered governance
- The development of distinct indicators for the two
- Development of distinct measures for each indicator (see Appendix 1 for Measures of Indicators of Governance both improved and engendered)
- A clear conceptual framework outlining these distinctions as well as the factors that affect them (the dependent and independent variables listed in Appendix 2).

Table 1. Indicators of Perceived Improved and Improved Engendered Governance	
Perceived Improved Governance	Improved, Engendered Governance
Transparency	Engendered Transparency
Accountability	Engendered Accountability
Equity for rich and poor	Equity for poor women
Sustainability	Sustainability for women
Community participation	Participation of women
Efficiency of delivery of goods and services	Efficiency of delivery of goods and services to women

For an expanded set of definitions in Table 1 see Appendix 6: Definitions

II. An Appropriate Research and Analytical Framework

With a new set of definitions and tools to measure improved governance and improved engendered governance, one can evaluate state and civil society programmes and initiatives with these new tools to see when in fact governance is both improved and engendered.

A broad conceptual framework for understanding governance requires that one looks at it at the national, state and village levels. Of late since there has been additional emphasis on the community or the Gram Sabha, a framework that conceptualizes this level needs to be evolved. A first attempt has been made included in Appendix 2. The Gram Sabha varies its scope from state to state. For instance, initially Gram sabhas were held in the village which housed the panchayat and people from other villages under the GP had to attend the GS in that village. Later in Karnataka and possibly other states, separate GSs had to be held in every village under the panchayat. In Karnataka policy changes have been expected by which Gram Sabhas have been mandated in every basti and are now to be called Basti Sabhas.

At the national level governance is influenced also by global factors and by national initiatives, national legislation, national programmes and national machineries. National movements like the Right to Information movement now in different states and the strength of women's movement at the national level is of critical importance here.

At the state level governance is influenced also by state initiatives, state legislation, state programmes and state machineries. Here movements like the right to information movement, which may be strong in some states (like Rajasthan), weak or absent in others can impact governance. Similarly the women's movement, women's organizations and initiatives can be stronger or weaker in certain states and that can engender governance. Political party initiatives and policies are important in that parties can act on scale. In this respect, the communist parties (especially in Kerala) have played a critical role in improving governance by devolving 30 percent of funds to the GPs which give them large budgets of 30 lakhs or more which gives women elected leaders more funds to plan or deliver public goods with.

At the village level many more factors come into play including socio economic variables ascribed such as caste, gender, religion, and acquired such as class, gender, income, literacy among others, which can vary widely across states, across districts within states and across

villages within districts. The extent to which women are organized through the presence of community based organizations (Mahila Mandals, or sanghas) or NGOs at the district or block levels engenders governance. The strength of government institutions that work with women or organize women or deliver services to women also helps strengthen civil society institutions which can improve governance indirectly. The extent to which elected officials and women elected officials are trained respectively can improve or engender governance. The amount of prior experience an elected woman leader has be it as an elected official or as the leader of a Sangha can have developed leadership skills and characteristics such as accountability to women within her, which can improve and engender governance both. The composition of the Gram Panchayat be it very few women, 33 percent or more than 50 percent or be it an all women Panchayat can reflect in the decisions made by the GP. As long as women constitute a third of the Panchayat they do not have a voting majority their decisions may not reflect in the overall decision making process. But if they constituted 50 percent or more this may increase the number of decisions women elected leaders make. A clear conceptual framework takes into consideration the variation by state and village both.

Thus if the dependent variable is governance (improved and improved engendered both), the independent variables could include:

- Socio-economic status (ascribed and acquired) of elected men and women in each state. Ascribed socio-economic factors include caste, religion and sex while acquired factors include status of women, literacy, skills among others.
- Organization:
 - The political machinery and institutions within each state (party interventions, strength of the state election commissions and state finance commissions and other relevant state bodies).
 - Strength of civil society institutions working on governance issues in each state (especially in relation to political party strength and their interventions)
 - Strength of women's institutions in each state
- Prior Experience: The number of terms women have been in power (in Karnataka reservations have been in place for three terms, in Bihar women have been in power for only one term and in other states women are in their second term). Similarly of there is a strong sangha presence where the sangha has got their women elected increases a women's prior leadership experience.
- Training and other interventions
- Legislative differences across states, degree to which the 73rd amendment has been implemented in each state and obstacles towards its implementation.
- Composition of the GP.

Thus any broad national study involving several states would have to have such a conceptual framework in mind (See Appendix 2 entitled Conceptual Framework).

III. Section: Provisions of the 73rd Amendment

Different states have enacted the 73rd Amendment in the form of distinct state laws which vary. The 73rd Amendment thus has provisions that vary based on state acts. Based on state laws, socio-economic and political conditions in the state and the interventions of both state and civil society, the implementation of the 73rd amendment and its provisions varies. Thus too does the impact of 73rd amendment.

Thus there has been some societal learning across time which needs to be understood both in terms of elected women understanding the political scenario over their term and difference in behaviour of elected women in the first and second terms (Purushothaman, Anil Kumar and Purohit, 1999).

There is also a difference in learning over time among civil society institutions namely women's institutions and NGOs that have engaged in the issue of governance. For example in Karnataka in the first term it took a while before NGOs engaged while by the second term they had developed some level of experience and training modules which spanned the pre-election, during election and post election periods. By the end of the second term NGOs had brought a ranges of different training modules into PRI institutions including their areas of specialization such as health, gender, and so on (Purushothaman, Anil Kumar and Purohit, 1999).

IV. Section: Reservations for women

The reservation itself being a third needs to be examined critically to understand the basis for one third especially since:

- Women constitute at least one half of the Indian population
- A third of the seats means they do not having voting majority in any PRI tier.
- The rotation¹ of reservation creates a situation where women do not have the opportunity to carry over their experience from one term to the next especially as the seat once declared as general is perceived as reserved for men.

¹ As a consequence of the 73rd amendment every electoral seat representing a particular constituency from a particular geographical area can now be subject to reservation. In other words this seat can be reserved for a woman, a scheduled caste, or left as a general seat open to anyone. If the seat is declared to be reserved for a woman, then only women can run for elections from that constituency. Because by law, there is only reservation to the tune of 33 percent, for women from every constituency to get the opportunity to be elected, the reservation is rotated from one set of constituencies to another set of constituencies. Similarly for the positions of village panchayat chair (sarpanch) a third of all villages are headed by women and in a period of 15 years every village in India should have been headed by a woman. This means that each term a different set of constituencies and villages are reserved for women and the set that was previously reserved becomes a general seat. While a general seat is open to everyone it is now perceived to be a male seat because the other seats have been reserved for women.

V. Section: Current status of women in Panchayati Raj Institutions: Positive observations

Other Positive Observations (See Appendix 3)

Based on studies done in Karnataka and Maharashtra other positive observations include:

- *Change Over Time:* Women in the first term performed relatively poorly compared to women elected officials in the second terms. In the first term, the entire experience of local self governance was new for government and NGOs alike. The range and quality of interventions increased and improved over the two terms leading to better results. There may have been a political education which women went through that resulted in their improved political participation over time but this has not been systematically proved. Here the performance of women across time is relevant even to understanding the variation across states where women have been in power for one, two or three terms respectively.

In Karnataka in the first term women had barely entered politics and were just getting their feet wet. Many did not know what their roles were, training barely existed to tell them their roles and what was expected from them. Moreover the national consensus that came with the 73rd and 74th amendments which made officials at every level open to these changes was not there for women in their first term. However in the second term a completely different scenario was found. Not only had women entered politics but also NGOs and the government were geared and ready for them with training on the functioning of the PRIs from day 1. As women progressed through the term other NGOs with their myriad experiences and expertise, brought their skills into the panchayat making gender sensitization a standard and bringing legal literacy within the panchayats. Towards the end of the second term NGOs were beginning to introduce newer areas into local government.

- *New Areas in Local Governance* such as environment, health, reproductive health and AIDs education were brought into the Gram Panchayat System and NGOs had started experimenting on education and planning for action in these new areas. By the end of this term the various forms of training that are essential were clear and the new areas being adopted were still in an experimental stage.
- *Wide range of new interventions:* Across and within states, women's organizations and NGOs have developed a range of innovative interventions in the form of capacity building measures around the functions of the PRIs, the provisions of the 73rd Amendment, leadership, gender training, literacy, budgets, programmes for women, vision building exercises for women, right to information, micro planning, communications, and even sensitization programmes geared to government functionaries. These interventions have led to better participation, improved transparency and accountability, improved service delivery among other indicators of improved governance. The nature and type of intervention has evolved based on conditions in each state and can vary from reformist to even activist. For instance in Rajasthan, the

conditions of women are bad which has resulted paradoxically in strong women's movements and even stronger forms of backlash against women. Thus the interventions in Rajasthan take a movement form rather than the reformist types of interventions seen in Karnataka. Understanding some of these interventions is crucial to know what experiences are state specific and which innovations lend to replication.

- *Changed Definition of Leadership:* Women through being in power have started to redefine for themselves what they consider leadership. An engendered perspective of a leader is that of a person who does not lie, does not lose his/her patience, is willing to explain the programmes to people and to say what they can do for people and is broad minded. Leadership meant honesty, openness about the available resources, decision making and implementation of schemes and in the last instance directing their work towards their constituencies. This view is radically different from the traditional view of leaders being charismatic public speakers and being overtly strong.

Leadership is a quality that is also fostered through collective support. The sanghas are non-traditional spaces where women are given the opportunity to develop and define their leadership skills. Sanghas acts as training grounds for inculcating this new engendered form of leadership where women leaders emerge knowing what other women value. Leadership therefore also meant being accountable to community women who were instrumental in bringing them to power and to lower castes when elected on a reserved seat for the lower castes and other backward communities.

- *Increased Access:* Simply having women in power has allowed women in the community better access to influencing decision making as previously women would not approach men in power. Today with women in power, women in and out of sanghas both, have a forum to voice women's concerns and issues which is different from before.
- *Emergence of the Gram Sabha:* Another area for cutting edge intervention is the Gram Sabha because increasingly it is seen as the forum for decision making and as the polity where accountability should begin and end. There are currently initiatives in the making that are focusing purely on the Gram Sabha and these initiatives are distinct and separate from those focusing on the Gram Panchayat because they basically prepare and organize the community for increased participation in governance.

VI. Section: Areas of Concern

For every problem, there is an opportunity and with every opportunity, there is a chance to shape change.

For every area of concern listed, thinking towards change on the micro (interventions) and macro (broad strategies) levels is needed. (See Appendices 4 and 5).

Other important gaps also include:

- *Information Gap:* Organizations are in the process of evolving a wide range of innovations and not enough known about them indicating a major information gap on the

part of organizations, government and other stakeholders working in the area of governance.

- *Interventions in Pockets and Not Comprehensive:* There are very few examples of women being able to take advantage of multiple types of interventions.
- *New Areas of Concern:* new areas for capacity building have emerged recently which require concerted attention for which training modules need to be designed. These include sensitization of GP secretaries, providing women with a communications module to help them in public speaking, and the Gram sabha.
- *Lack of Scale:* Innovations are carried out in tiny pockets and not on scale.
- *Lack of Awareness in Government* who has the resources and training budgets but their training programmes seem to be far less effective than NGO programmes.
- *Lack of Replication within States:* Few forums exist for cross-fertilization within states.
- *Lack of Replication across States:* Language, social and cultural barriers and differences across states make cross fertilization across states even harder.
- *Gram sabha:* The involvement of the community, of sanghas and of women in the gram sabha and with the Gram Panchayat needs to be better evolved and researched.
- *Changing men's attitudes:* Gram panchayat secretaries, mostly men, as well as male elected representatives in the PRIs are often hostile, cold, or indifferent to women. Most men are not aware about why it is important to have women in power in the first place.

VII. Broad Strategies

Broadly upon matching the areas of concern, challenges to the interventions, the broad strategies that emerge fall into the following categories

- Research on the barriers and what works and does not work
- Training and Capacity Building
- Information dissemination and awareness raising
- Alliance and Partnership building
- Civil Society and governance interaction
- Advocacy
- Creation of new mechanisms and forums for interaction and dialogue
- Monitoring, evaluation and feedback mechanism

These strategies will be further developed into concept papers for CARE to consider given its priorities and goals. However the following section provides a broad framework for intervention.

The opportunities that arise for intervention from the gaps outlined are many. First there is a major trend in all government programmes towards participatory planning and implementation towards the goal of building in sustainability. Thus, in accordance with this larger trend, there is the political space for NGOs to upscale and mainstream their interventions through government-NGO collaboration.

However an essential first step is to know what exists, what works and what does not, and what can or cannot be replicated. It is only after this first step of research, evaluation and documentation can the next stage of consolidation, redesign, mainstreaming and dissemination take place of a comprehensive training strategy and the accompanying capacity building measures. However this research should not take place in isolation. Instead a larger forum of all stake holders at state and national levels need to be brought together prior to any research towards shaping the research agenda. Government participation here is essential if advocacy and policy changes are to be linked to the research. Similarly NGOs and other organizations working in the area of governance should also be involved from the very beginning so that research and action are also linked.

There is space to intervene at the policy level in terms of utilizing government resources and infrastructure for training with NGOs taking the lead in helping government functionaries by:

- Sensitizing government on the needs of elected representatives, and barriers that they face, especially of women and the lower castes
- Providing examples of the types of training and intervention strategies that address those needs and overcome the barriers
- Creation of a comprehensive training and intervention strategy which stage capacity building measures according to need.
- Train government functionaries on this comprehensive strategy
- Train other organizations working on governance on this strategy.
- Redesign of the government training curriculum and policy intervention to better utilize public resources being spent on training and capacity building.

Such a comprehensive training and capacity building strategy once in place, should be monitored and evaluated to identify the following:

- How to further fine tune this strategy
- New areas for capacity building
- Other barriers which require structural and policy level measures

The government being intrinsically involved at this stage would facilitate advocacy on structural and policy changes required to improve the climate in which elected women representatives function.

Involving NGOs right through the process helps in the following ways:

- NGOs will only share their work if they have a clear stake in the process. To share their particular areas of expertise, NGOs should feel that this sharing will result in upscaling their work which will only take place in the context of a larger forum. This could be in the form of a task force on governance which involved major funders, policy and decision makers, government and NGOs.
- NGOs should also shape the research agenda to make it useful to the ground.
- Involving all stake holders throughout the research process helps create more ownership over the research findings rather than spreading the research findings after completion with stakeholders.
- The research process itself has to be different in that it should be designed to educate not just the researchers but all stakeholders. Thus in design it should be participatory, inclusive and useful to both policy makers and NGOs on the ground. It should

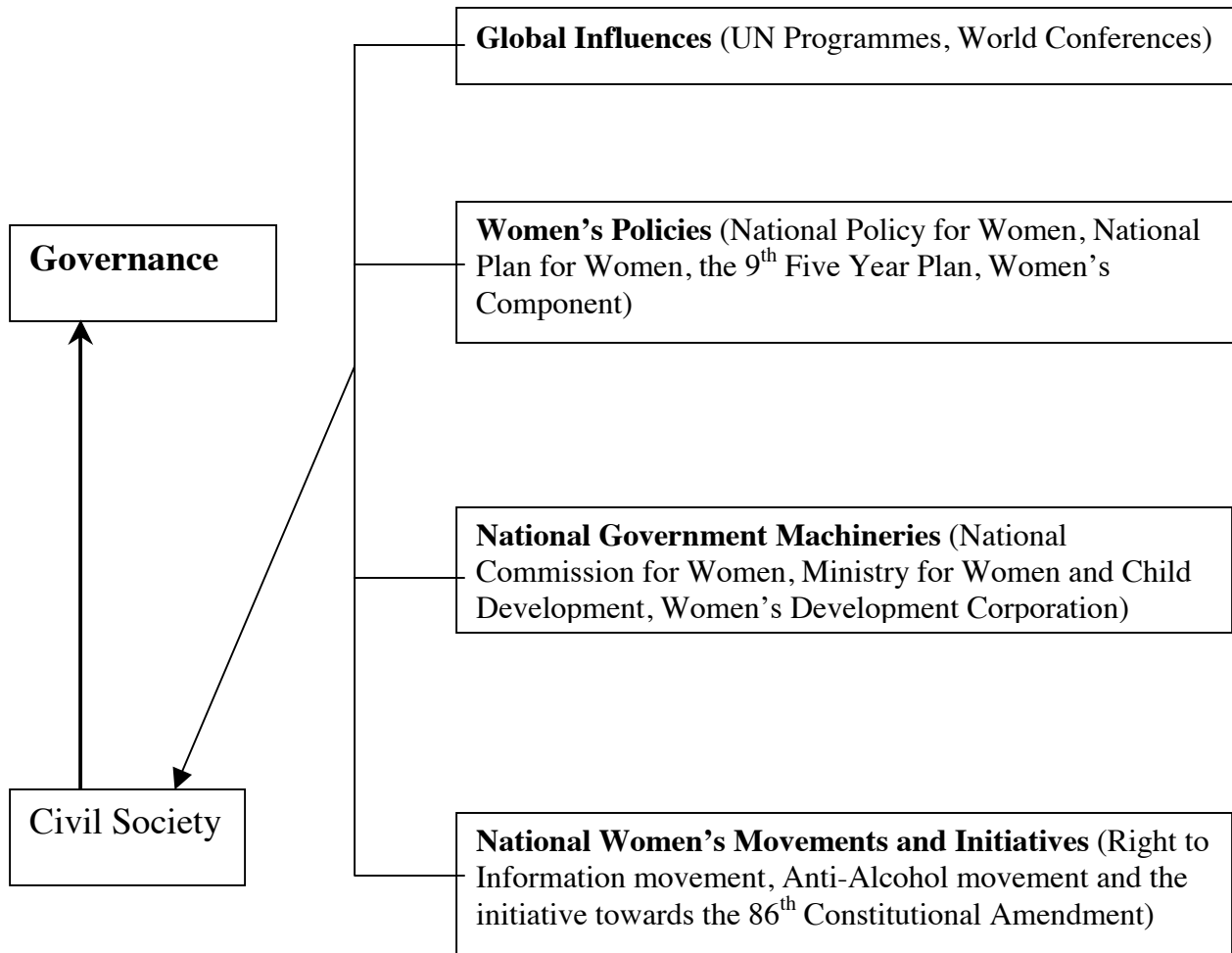
involve exposure visits to model panchayats for officials and NGOs within and across states.

- The research should surface the strengths of each NGO's area of expertise for all stakeholders and create an atmosphere and the demand for cross fertilization.
- Involving at the state and national levels the major civil society actors creates a larger forum for advocacy on areas of concern that are surfaced.
- Government NGO interaction can facilitate the use of a wide range of resources on the part of both.
- Relationships and partnerships are already in place such that a comprehensive capacity building strategy can now be more easily mainstreamed into redesigning government training curricula on self governance and training required for government functionaries to implement this new strategy becomes a natural outcome of such a larger alliance.
- At the later stage of implementation, NGOs can act as monitors, resource people and to provide feedback on what works and does not work towards helping in the evaluation process to surface further gaps and barriers.

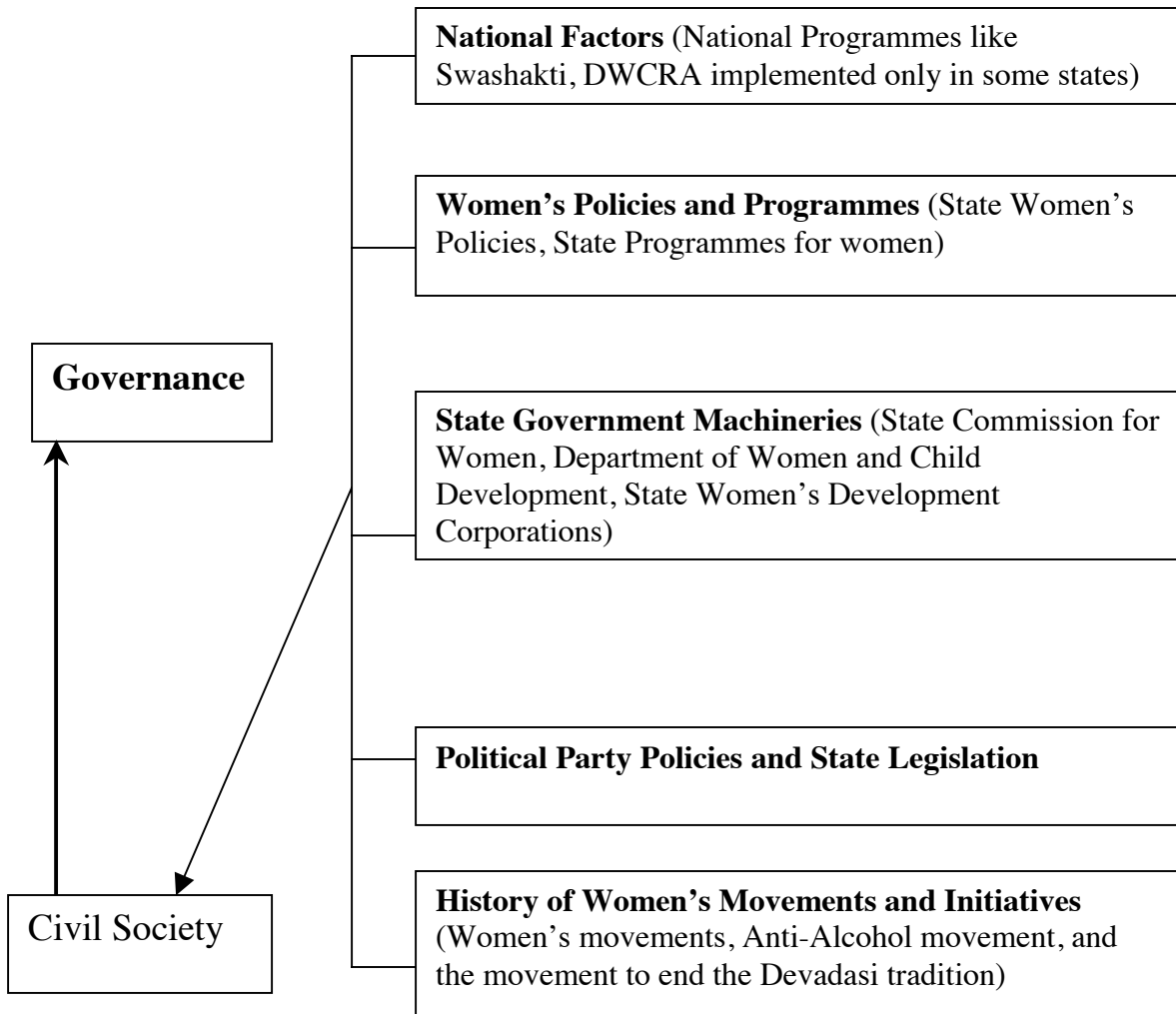
Appendix 1: Measures of Indicators of Governance

Increased transparency	Extent to which budgets and decisions are made public. Number of public assemblies held per year. Extent to which people participate in assemblies Extent to which elected officials are accessible to people Extent to which programmes are explained to people
Engendered transparency	Extent to which elected officials are accessible to women Extent to which programmes, budgets, decisions are shown to women Extent to which this information is accessible to women
Increased accountability	Nature of communication between elected officials and the community
Engendered Accountability Equity	Communication between elected officials and women Increased access to resources of the voting constituency Improved standard of living for all groups
Equity for women	Increased access to resources for women Improved standard of living for women
Sustainability Sustainability for women	Lasting changes for the community Enduring changes for women
Community Participation processes	Increased participation of the community in decision- making
Participation of women	Increased participation of women in decision making Extent to which women participate in the assemblies Increased participation of the sangha at panchayat meetings Extent to which the panchayat consults the sangha
Efficiency of delivery of goods and services	More and higher quality of public goods (roads, water, sanitation, housing, electricity, transportation)
Efficiency of delivery of goods and services for women	More and higher quality of public goods (roads, water, sanitation, housing, electricity, transportation) that women need.

Appendix 2:Chart 1: Conceptual Framework: National Level



Appendix 2:Chart 2: Conceptual Framework: State Level



Appendix 1: Chart 3: Conceptual Framework: Village Level

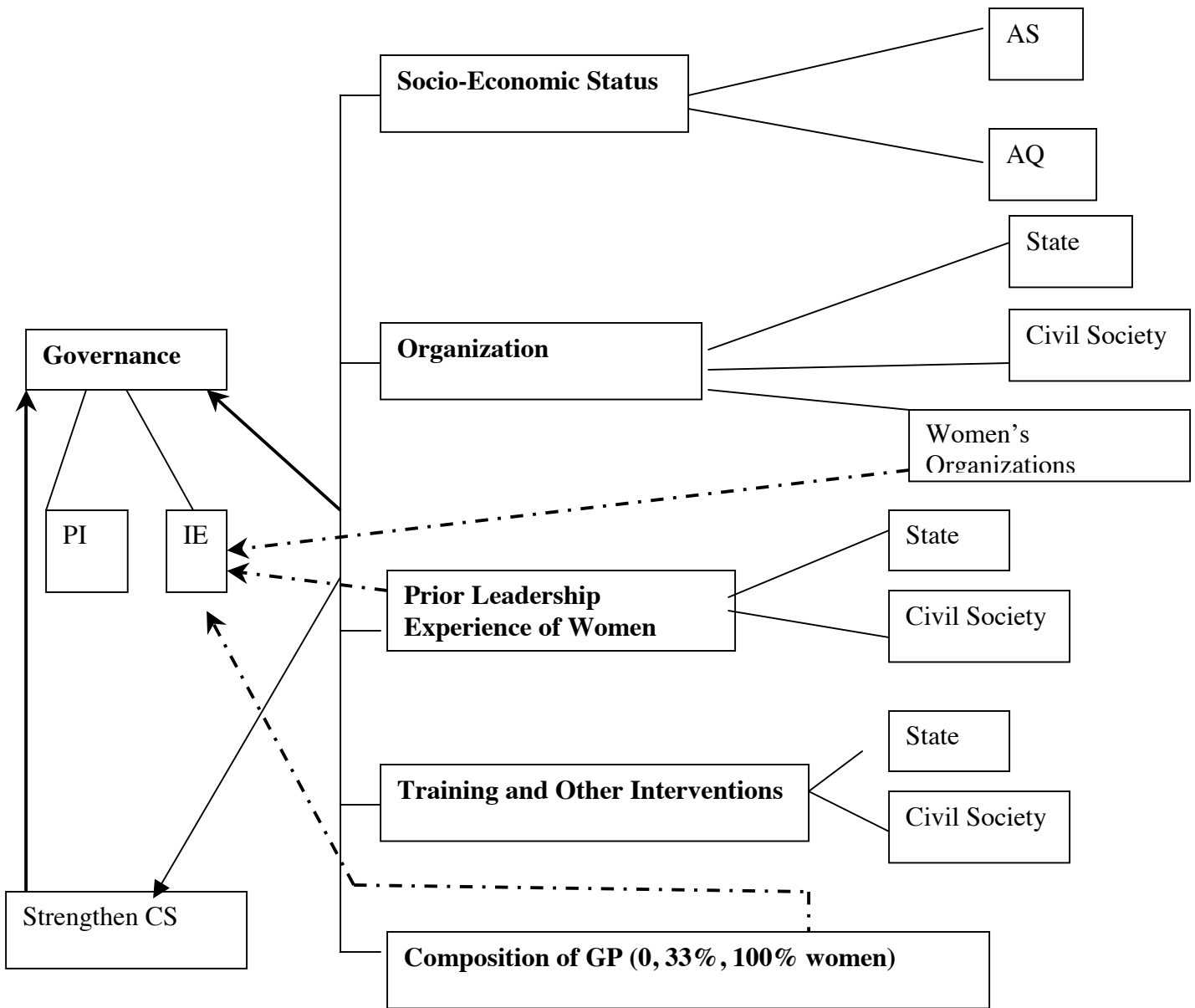
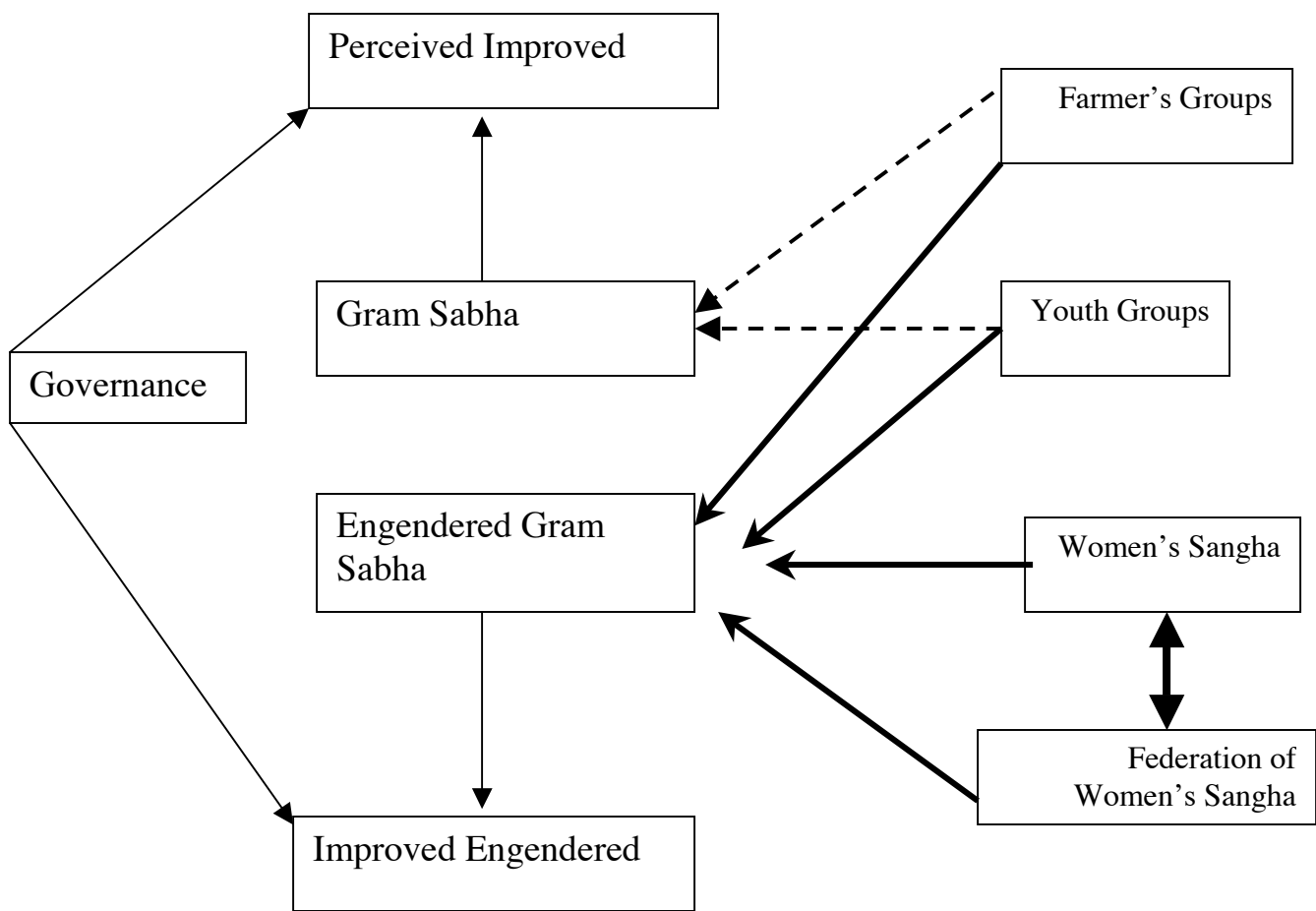
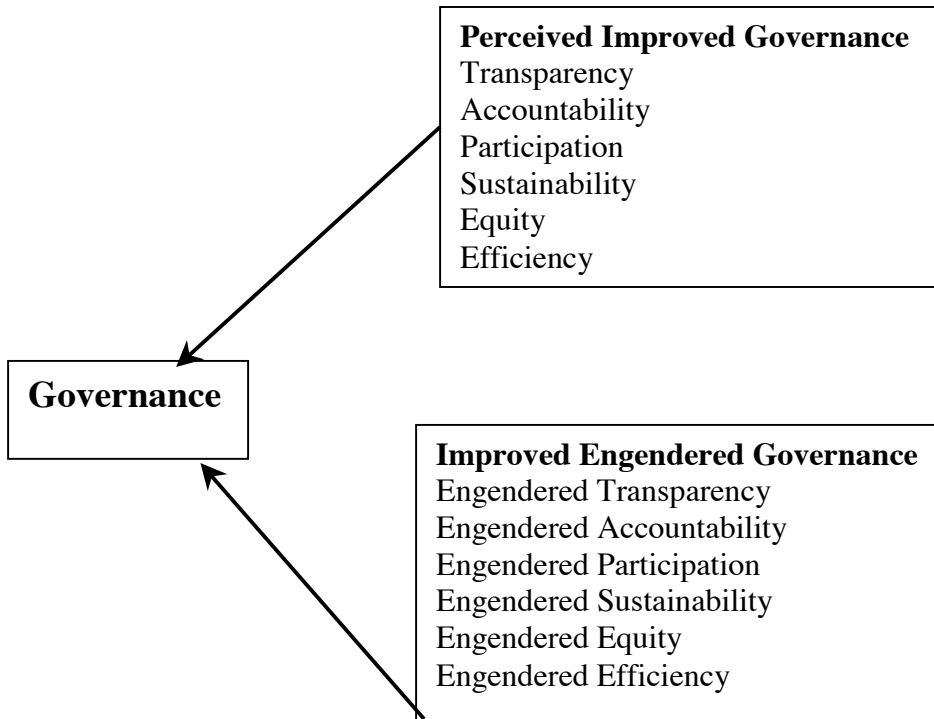


Chart 4: Conceptual Framework: Gram Sabha Level



**Chart 5: Dependent Variable:
Perceived Improved Governance Vs Improved Engendered Governance**



Appendix 3: Excerpts from the Executive Summary of “Engendering Governance: The Karnataka Experience.”

Please note that the findings below of the positive aspects of the Karnataka experience of women in governance are not universal to all elected women representatives. Rather this reflects the experience of those women whose capacity has been built by NGO intervention.

Key Findings

Women’s participation has been through a process of evolution over the last two terms. The second term findings show an increase in the participation and the functioning of the women in the Panchayati Raj Institutions. Elected women representatives (EWRs) now have a clearer vision of their needs and responsibilities in the PRIs. In this term there are examples of self-motivated candidates and also of members who have retained their post even after being ridiculed or threatened. Another important characteristic of this term is that the NGOs and the State Governments trained the elected women representatives across the country on the Panchayati Raj process. This training had a great impact on the functioning and participation of all stakeholders of the system.

Organizational Interventions

Organizations act as a strong support system to EWRs reversing initial passivity, as a result of fear or ignorance, by providing training and generating awareness. Where there are CBOs this support system is further enhanced by:

- Creating awareness on the electoral process prior to elections.
- Supporting campaigners and fostering community participation in the voting process during elections.
- Training elected members on the governance process.
- Ensuring the participation of all sections of the community.
- Developing networks and federations at all levels for dialogue and dissemination.
- Acting as catalysts to facilitate the participation of women at all levels

The intervention and information transfer via organizations becomes a crucial input in helping women get into the panchayats, and once in power, getting access to procedural information and panchayat resources.

Training

The second term witnessed a consolidation of training needs of the EWRs.

Content: The most essential training modules now include:

- Functioning of the PRIs, roles, responsibilities, rules and regulations.
- Gender training, i.e. skill and confidence building, role clarification, attitudinal changes on gender.
- Budgets and finances of the PRIs
- Programmes implemented through the PRIs

Approaches: The project and the process approaches are two main types of approaches used for training. In the former, training is conducted only at a specific period of time and there is no follow up. Whereas in the latter, training is a continuous process that allows for follow up and reinforcement of important issues.

Training Methods: Some of the insights gained on training methods are:

- Prioritize and have interactive and participatory training.
- Performance oriented rather than traditional paper and pencil methods are more effective.
- Training must demonstrate that for a more equal society both men and women have to be educated together in a non-formal atmosphere. One strategy suggested by the trainees themselves was that the men should train the women and vice versa.
- A holistic approach yields long-term solutions.

Impact of Training:

Pedagogical Impact: Attitudes and pedagogical learning can be measured by interviewing the secretaries and members of the Gram Panchayats, the members of the community, the women themselves and government officials.

Action Impact:

- Capacity to govern: Training Gram Panchayat members helped them access information about government programmes, the functioning of PRIs, how to participate, where to get funds, and were therefore better equipped to govern. After the training noticeable changes in women were reported. They started asking more questions and wanted to monitor the programmes more closely.
- Training taught EWRs that 20 percent of funds should be allocated for SCs/STs. This helped them channel funds towards these marginalized sections.
- Training has helped EWRs develop their articulation skills, planning skills and has build their confidence.

The New Areas Currently Being Developed via the Panchayats

New areas are starting to emerge where training can be seen as both facilitative as well as highly innovative:

- Legal Literacy and Literacy: Work here can facilitate equity concerns as women and EWRs are made aware of their rights. Literacy gives them access to information.
- Environment: Work on environment via the panchayats can facilitate environmental sustainability of governance and development.
- Health: This is also an issue of long term sustainability of the human resources of an area and is increasingly being seen as a concern of local government.
- Reproductive Health: Issues such as AIDS, the devadasi system and all other kinds of reproductive health related issues with taboos associated with them when taken up by the panchayats can actually help demystify these taboos.

The initiatives in these areas need to be systematized and dialogue forums can then consolidate the lessons learnt.

Participation

- Participation was measured using indicators such as the presence of women in decision-making fora, the nature and extent of their functioning in the PRIs and in the Gram Sabhas (which indicate community participation). It was found that:
- The physical presence of the women in the Panchayats and the gram sabhas **has increased** at all levels.
- Opportunity for training EWRs **increased** and there has been a demand for literacy, which some organizations have responded to.
- Leadership skills of EWRs improved leading to an **increased capacity** to raise issues, intervene, implement decisions and **increased access to resources** for the community.
- Training has facilitated the articulation of EWRs, changed attitudes, **enhanced their interaction** with local institutions such as schools, government agencies, police, among others.
- While more Gram Sabhas are held and Panchayat monthly meetings regularized, the participation of women in the Gram Sabhas has been mainly in the form of attendance with a few instances of vocal EWRs and sangha representatives. In the Panchayat meetings however more women were seen articulating their views and concerns.

Transparency

Transparency was measured by the extent to which EWRs were aware of the governance process, and whether and how they were able to bring this knowledge to others in the Gram Panchayat and in the Gram Sabha. Findings indicate that EWRs have been able to bring about a higher degree of transparency as is indicated by the instances where:

- Knowledge of the actual rules and procedures gained through Panchayati Raj training, wherever available, makes the governance process transparent first for the EWRs themselves and, where they are in dialogue with women from the community, for the larger female constituency.
- EWRs have questioned corruption and where possible checked it by monitoring Panchayat work.
- EWRs have asked for meetings to be held only in the presence of a full quorum.
- EWRs have expressed the need to provide information to those who are not literate by reading out minutes, circulars and so on.

Accountability

Accountability is measured by the extent and degree to which decisions made by the Gram Sabha are carried out and elected representatives are accountable to their constituencies.

Engendered accountability, defined by EWRs themselves takes accountability a step further by expanding it to the more marginalized, particularly to women.

- Improved Accountability: For many EWRs, being in power meant doing work for their communities and explaining Gram Panchayat activities to people. Furthermore, their work was directed towards the welfare of the larger community, not themselves. It has been found that after the EWRs learn about the Gram Sabhas they insist on holding regular meetings and that decisions be taken in front of all the people. More Gram Sabhas held means a larger possibility for more people being aware about the transactions and decisions of the panchayat. It is at the Gram Sabhas that beneficiaries are chosen. Therefore one forum at

which members can be held accountable to their election promises and to their constituencies is the Gram Sabha.

- Engendered, improved accountability: Women elected officials in implementing government programmes first make sure that the needy are included and that they take up women specific issues. They have also tried to eliminate alcoholism through banning the consumption and sale of liquor in their villages. Alcoholism is typically seen as a gender specific problem where the interests of the families are sacrificed for gratification of this addiction. Therefore accountability from the EWRs' perspectives meant being responsive to the most marginalised namely the poor and women (as opposed to being accountable only to their voting constituency).

Equity

Equity is measured by ensuring equal access to resources and opportunities for all groups. Engender equity is measured by the degree to which women in those groups get access to resources and opportunities.

- Social inclusion/acceptance: The EWRs ensure equal opportunity to all members of the community via panchayat proceedings. They pay particular attention to marginalised groups including the widows, Devadasis and lower castes.
- Access of poor to programmes and resources: They prioritize the marginalized by:
 - Ensuring that resources set aside for the lower castes reach them.
 - Opening up access to water resources, temples and other public services and facilities for the lower castes.
 - Ensuring that the most needy get priority in access to resources and opportunity.
- Equity for women: In challenging patriarchal norms and practices EWRs have tried to equalize the conditions for men and women. They have done this by challenging customs such as dowry in their families. They have also done this by providing more access to resources for poor women, widows and access to resources for sanghas.

Sustainability

Strictly speaking sustainability has been used in the context of ensuring environmental balance and to ensure that natural resources of the community are not depleted. However sustainability also has another connotation, i.e., it includes those projects/activities that can be pursued and maintained in the long run. Among such lasting changes are:

- Change in literacy levels which can be a tool of political empowerment
- Change in attitudes of men in the community and officials
- A redefinition and engendering of leadership notions
- Building a stronger institutional set of relationships between the sanghas and the PRIs

Environmental sustainability: Gram Panchayat women members raised environmental issues such as cleaning up ponds and public spaces in their areas. The male elected members have different priorities. Some NGOs are taking up the issue of environment via the panchayats thereby raising the awareness on environment in the communities.

Developing, redefining and engendering leadership: Women through being in power have started to redefine for themselves what they consider leadership. An engendered perspective of a leader is that of a person who does not lie, does not lose his/her patience, is willing to explain the

programmes to people and to say what they can do for people and is broad minded. Leadership meant honesty, openness about the available resources, decision making and implementation of schemes and in the last instance directing their work towards their constituencies. This view is radically different from the traditional view of leaders being charismatic public speakers and being overtly strong.

Leadership is a quality that is also fostered through collective support. The sanghas are non-traditional spaces where women are given the opportunity to develop and define their leadership skills. Sanghas acts as training grounds for inculcating this new engendered form of leadership where women leaders emerge knowing what other women value. Leadership therefore also meant being accountable to community women who were instrumental in bringing them to power and to lower castes when elected on a reserved seat for the lower castes and other backward communities.

Appendix 4: From Critique to Change

Area of Concern	Potential Intervention
Younger women were largely absent from panchayats.	Young women can be organized through Yuvak Mandals and made aware on issues related to governance. Girl's schools and their curriculums can be targeted to introduce the subject of local self-governance and motivate young girls to become leadership. Motivate young teenage girls and their families to attend Gram Sabhas.
Dalit and lower caste women are absent from the panchayat.	Work with lower caste and Dalit organizations on governance issues and strategize with them to improve their political participation.
Lack of formal education	Successful modules on basic literacy, can be used as an entry point in education. Creation or consolidation of comprehensive functional educational tools for women elected representatives who lack formal education.
The Issue of Proxy Women	Insistence that the women attend the training programmes not their husbands and awareness generated among these women on their roles and responsibilities as elected representatives of the people.
Obstacles and barriers to women posed by men	Gender training for men on the spirit of the 73 rd amendment and the need for women in power.
Obstacles to women attending meetings including lack of information and heavy domestic responsibilities	Training for women's families, men and GP secretaries towards the goal of increasing the space for women's political participation.
Practical problems like distance of the Gram Sabha meeting venues, unsuitable timings, and household responsibilities.	Child care provisions for women elected officials Gram Sabhas to be held in every basti called Basti Sabhas (as in Karnataka).
Chilly climate syndrome where men are violent, ignore or belittle women.	Men and women both have to be educated and made aware of this issue.
Indifference of the bureaucracy and preference to deal with male representatives.	Federate women at all levels Sensitize government officials Study tour of elected women to government agencies

Appendix 5: From Challenge to Strategy

Challenges	Potential Strategy
A. Low levels of literacy or awareness among elected women	1.1 Training and capacity building of elected women representatives (EWRs) to read basic documents and understand all governance related areas (budgets, government agencies and schemes, roles and responsibilities of the GP and so on).
B. Low levels of self-confidence and self-worth	2.1. Training and capacity building on leadership skills, articulation, communication 2.2. Training and capacity building basic areas of governance (see 1.1.)
C. Caste and class differences D. Unfavourable attitudes and biases on participation of women in politics	3.1. Sensitization of all GP members, Secretaries and officials on caste, class and gender issues 3.2. Capacity Building of the lower castes and poor GP members (1.1. and 2.1.) 3.3. Build federations among the underprivileged groups of GP members
E. Inadequate powers and resources of the Panchayati Raj Institutions	4.1. Research on states where there has been greater devolution of powers and resources, tax base, legislation, implementation, training and capacity building to understand mechanisms for devolution and resources and gaps across states. 4.2. Advocacy, training or attitudinal changes as per the research findings
F. Inadequacies in functioning of the Panchayati Raj Institutions f.1. Poor functioning of the gram sabhas f.2. Poor coordination between three tiers of the Panchayati Raj Institutions f.3. Interference by bureaucracy f.4. Postponement of elections	5.1. Research and mainstreaming of all initiatives on the Gram Sabha 5.2. Creation of dialogue forums for the ERs from all PRI tiers and officials from the bureaucracy. 5.3. Research on current gaps in coordination and efficiency in functioning of the PRIs 5.4. Research and advocacy on means to strengthen the functioning and autonomy of the National Election Commission and State Election Commissions